

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION
Special Education Services
Nan Gray, Director Special Education

REQUEST FOR LETTERS OF INTENT & PROPOSALS

Project Priorities for Improving Results for Children with Disabilities

Notification Date: September 15, 2006

Letter of Intent Due Date: December 1, 2006

Proposal Notification Date: December 15, 2006

Proposal Due Date: January 27, 2007

Project Notification Date: February 17, 2006

Public Announcement: March 30, 2007

Funds Available: July 1, 2007

Eligible Applicants: Projects may be proposed by Local Education Agencies and /or Institutions of Higher Education.

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Background:

The Special Education Section of the State Office of Education is requesting a letter of intent for proposed discretionary projects. This will assist us in addressing our most critical priorities in the upcoming year. Using this information will also provide preliminary budget information for our fiscal planning. Enclosed is information related to the State Office of Education priorities for Fiscal Year 2007-2008.

Priority 1

Develop, implement, and evaluate a system for ensuring recruitment, employment, and retention of highly qualified staff.

Utah has consistently experienced persistent shortages of special education teachers and related services personnel. Many Utah school districts continue to employ significant numbers of special education teachers on letters of authorization in hard-to-staff classrooms and schools. Pressure caused by these shortages is compounded by the No Child Left Behind Act and IDEA 2004 requiring all states to have a fully licensed teacher in every classroom by the 2006-07 school year.

The purpose of this priority is to support projects that will improve and/or develop programs that provide personnel preparation for special education teachers and related servers to enhance the supply of highly qualified and highly skilled personnel serving Utah's students with disabilities. Projects funded under this priority will offer programs through alternative routes to licensure, distance outreach, and other non-traditional methods of personnel preparation.

To be considered for funding, all applicants must demonstrate the following:

- a) How their project will contribute to decreasing personnel shortages and result in a larger number of highly qualified educators for students with disabilities in Utah.
- b) How their project will collaborate with Utah LEAs and the USOE and, as a result of that collaboration, build capacity.
- c) How their project aligns with Utah State Office of Education State Performance Plan (SPP).
- d) How their project will use effective, research-based training practices and methods.
- e) How their project will train prospective educators to use scientifically validated interventions and instructional procedures for students with disabilities.
- f) How their project will improve outcomes for students with disabilities.
- g) How their project will use other funding sources and in-kind resources to leverage state funds.
- h) How project results can be disseminated statewide.

For additional information, contact Bruce Schroeder, Project Director. (801) 538-7580
bruce.schroeder@schools.utah.gov.

Priority 2: Access to the General Curriculum/Numeracy

Preliminary analysis of the May 2006 assessment results indicates that approximately one half of Utah's students with disabilities did not achieve a proficient score in the area of math. This has underscored the need for innovative, proactive instruction and interventions in delivery models that leads to student success in the general curriculum and numeracy.

In preparing students with disabilities to participate in state assessments, districts must be able to align curriculum and instruction for all students with academic content standards, facilitate the development of effective interventions to enable students to meet these high standards, become proficient in using data to drive educational decisions at all levels, and deliver professional development focused on targeted improvement strategies.

Discretionary projects under this program priority must show evidence of student achievement, how achievement will be monitored, and how evidence of achievement will be documented. The project funds are to assist districts, in collaboration with an Institute of Higher Education (IHE), close the achievement gap of students with disabilities in standards-based reform.

To be considered for funding, all applicants must demonstrate the following:

- a) How their project will improve outcomes for students with disabilities.
- b) How their project will collaborate with Utah Institutions of Higher Education and the USOE and, as a result of that collaboration, build capacity.
- c) How their project aligns with Utah State Office of Education State Performance Plan (SPP).
- d) How their project will use effective, research-based training practices and methods.
- e) How their project will train educators to use scientifically validated interventions and instructional procedures with students with disabilities.
- f) How their project will use other funding sources and in-kind resources to leverage state funds.

Anticipated Number of Awards 2006-2007

Priority 1: personnel preparation: 10-12 projects, Total Funds available approximately \$1,100,000

Priority 2: access to the general curriculum: 3-5 Project Grants, Range =\$10,000 to \$30,000.
Total Funds available approximately \$100,000

For additional information, contact Bruce Schroeder, Project Director. (801) 538-7580
bruce.schroeder@schools.utah.gov

Request for Proposal Process

Step 1: Submit a one page “letter of intent” indicating interest & topic due by 5 PM December 1, 2006. Letters must include the following and be limited to **one page** in length for each proposed project. Districts/IHE submitting more than one proposed project are encouraged to submit a single, combined letter listing all proposed projects.

- Name and address of the district/IHE, along with the name and phone number of a contact person.
- An **abstract** of the proposed project including (1) the personnel need(s) being addressed, (2) proposed audience & partners, (3) nature and extent of project activities, (4) description of outcomes, (5) estimated costs.

Send to:

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250 East 500 South
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200**

(801) 538-7509

(801) 538-7991 (FAX)

Step 2: After receiving invitation, submit full application (due January 26, 2007). Stakeholder panel review and funding selected projects (February 17, 2007). Grantees will be notified on or before March 1, 2007 with any changes or adjustments that are needed.

Grants will be funded for the period of July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008.

For additional information, contact Bruce Schroeder, Project Director. (801) 538-7580
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